

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASH DC 4414

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 OECD PARIS 27906

DEPT PASS LABOR FOR STEWART

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, OECD

SUBJECT: WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL INDICATORS, NOV. 12-15

1. SUMMARY: WORKING PARTY DISCUSSED DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY OECD SECRETARIAT COVERING SOCIAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT AND SIX MAJOR "AREAS OF CONCERN": HEALTH, EDUCATION, QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE, COMMAND OVER GOODS AND SERVICES, ACCESSIBILITY, AND HOUSING. WP MADE SEVERAL PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. SECRETARIAT PLANNING TO HOLD NEXT MEETING MAY-JUNE 1975. DENIS JOHNSTON, STATISTICAL POLICY DIVISION, OMB, HEADED US DEL. END SUMMARY
2. WP'S PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN:

A) HEALTH (SI/77, 77.I):

- 1) CONSULTATION WITH EXPERT GROUP RE KINDS AND DEGREE OF DISAGGRAGATION REQUIRED FOR SUCH HEALTH INDICATORS AS LIFE EXPECTANCY AT SELECTED AGES, INCIDENCE OF PARTICULAR ILLNESSES, DISABILITIES, MORBIDITY;

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- 2) MAXIMUM COORDINATION WITH WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZA-

TION;

3) NEED TO INCLUDE INDICATORS OF MENTAL ILLNESS
(TO BE CONSIDERED FOR MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENT).

B) EDUCATION (SI/78, 78.I)

1) THAT THE THREE PROPOSED CONCERNS BE MERGED INTO TWO: FIRSTLY, ATTAINMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF BASIC SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND VALUES NECESSARY FOR INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSFUL FUNCTIONING IN SOCIETY AND, SECONDLY, OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO INDIVIDUALS TO ACQUIRE, MAINTAIN, AND DEVELOP THESE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE.

2) SINCE THE FORMER CONCERN (PARA B-1 ABOVE) RELATES PRIMARILY TO MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL "OUTPUT", AND THE LATTER TO MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL "INPUT", WP RECOGNIZED NEED FOR LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF SURVEY INSTRUMENTS FOR ASSESSING POPULATION'S POSSESSION OF BASIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE. MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL "INPUT" -- FACILITIES INSTITUTIONS, ENROLLMENT, ETC. -- ARE READILY AVAILABLE IN THE SHORT-TERM.

3) WP RECOMMENDED DROPPING LARGE NUMBER OF POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF "LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES" E.G. LIBRARY USE, ATTENDANCE AT CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, NEWSPAPER READERSHIP AND BOOK SALES.

C) QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE (SI/83, 83.I, 84, 84.I, AND 85, 85.I)

1) RE AVAILABILITY OF GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT, WP RECOMMENDED FURTHER SPECIFICATION OF CONCEPT "BETTER" EMPLOYMENT; FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN COMBINING CONVENTIONAL LABOR FORCE DATA WITH JOB VACANCY DATA IN DEVELOPING INDICATORS FOR ADEQUACY OF AVAILABLE EMPLOYMENT, AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES SUITABLE FOR DESCRIBING EMPLOYMENT "DYNAMICS" -- I.E., THROUGH-TIME EXPERIENCE OF WORKERS AND JOB SEEKERS.

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2) RE QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE, WP RECOMMENDED SHIFTING MEASURES OF "UNPAID WORK" FROM C AREA TO CONCERN D (TIME AND LEISURE); CONSIDERATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY FROM C-2 TO CONCERN AREA C-1 (AVAILABILITY OF GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT), AND MEASURES OF FAMILY EARNINGS FROM C-2-B TO CONCERN AREA E (COMMAND OVER GOODS AND SERVICES). RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LONGER TERM DEVELOPMENT INCLUDED NEED TO DEVELOP MEASURES OF WORKING CONDITIONS

OF SELF-EMPLOYED, SOCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF
WORKING CONDITIONS, AND CONTRIBUTION OF UNION-MANAGEMENT
RELATIONS TO QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE.

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3) RE INDIVIDUAL SATISFACTION WITH WORKING LIFE, WP MADE
TWO RECOMMENDATIONS: A) MEASUREMENTS THAT SUBJECTIVE
PERCEPTIONS BE INCLUDED, AND B) EXPERIENCE ACQUIRED AMONG
MEMBER COUNTRIES WITH MULTI-ITEM "JOB SATISFACTION"
ATTITUDE SURVEYS BE FOLLOWED.

D) COMMAND OVER GOODS AND SERVICES (SI/80, 80.I, 80.II)

1) NEED FOR CONSULTATION WITH EXPERT GROUP TO
ENSURE OPTIMAL USE OF MEASURES DEVELOPED IN CONNECTION
WITH EXISTING SYSTEMS OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AND COMPLEMEN-
TARY SYSTEMS OF INCOME DISTRIBUTION, CONSUMPTION, AND
ACCUMULATION DEVELOPED IN THE U.N.

2) REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF PRIMARY GOAL AREA
IN RELATION TO OTHER PRIMARY GOAL AREAS.

- 3) FOR SHORT-TERM, USE OF "ENTILES" -- QUINTILES, DECILES, ETC., PLUS THE GINI COEFFICIENT WAS RECOMMENDED FOR SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME, WEALTH, ETC.
- 4) SEPARATE TREATMENT OF INCOME AND WEALTH.

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E) ACCESSIBILITY (SI/81, 81.I)

THIS GOAL AREA CONSTITUTES A "CROSS-CUT" WHOSE PURVIEW EXTENDS TO MOST OR ALL OTHER GOAL AREAS. WP RECOMMENDED INCLUSION OF MEASURES OF ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUDING SUBJECTIVE PERCEPTIONS OF ACCESSIBILITY, WITHIN EACH OF THE RELEVANT SOCIAL CONCERNS.

F) HOUSING (SI/82, 82.I)

1) WP RECOMMENDED INCLUSION OF SUCH "MACRO-ECONOMIC" FACTORS AS ADEQUACY OF EXISTING MARKET CONDITIONS, FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT RATES IN RELATION TO DEMAND AMONG DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSES.

2) COST AND FINANCING METHODS BE CONSIDERED UNDER CONCERN AREA "COMMAND OVER GOODS AND SERVICES".

3) MEASURES OF HOUSING ADEQUACY BE RELATED TO DIFFERENT KINDS OF INSTITUTIONAL POPULATIONS -- PRISONS, HOSPITALS, ETC.

3. PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT (SI/79.I)

WP MADE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS:

A) NEED TO ELABORATE OR REWORD DOCUMENT BY INCLUDING FURTHER TREATMENT OF SOME OF THE TECHNICAL ISSUES RELATING TO PROBLEMS OF AGGREGATION-DISAGGREGATION, AND SAMPLING VARIABILITY.

B) NEED TO CONSIDER FURTHER REVISION AS OPERATIONAL INDICATORS ARE DEVELOPED BY MEMBER COUNTRIES (E.G. INDICATORS OR PROXY MEASURES FEASIBLE FOR SHORT OR MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENT OR EMPLOYMENT, AS WELL AS LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. SUCH LONG-TERM ISSUES WOULD BE MEASURES OF BASIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE POSSESSED RATHER THAN YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED).

4. PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER WORK

MSA DIRECTOR GASS TOLD WP AT INITIAL AND CLOSING SESSIONS THAT SECRETARIAT INTENDS TO DEVELOP CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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FOR SOCIAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT BY END OF 1975. SECRETARIAT ALSO HOPES TO INITIATE EXPERIMENTAL EFFORTS AMONG SELECTED MEMBER COUNTRIES TOWARD INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS WITH ON-GOING POLICY-PLANNING EFFORTS RELATING TO BROAD SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES. SECRETARIAT ALSO HOPES TO FACILITATE WIDER DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED WORKING DOCUMENTS AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR COMMENT, AND PLANS TO SCHEDULE NEXT (NINTH) MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL INDICATORS IN MAY OR JUNE 1975, AND A LATER MEETING IN NOVEMBER 1975.
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